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C O N F I D E N T I A L LIMA 005365

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 02/08/2015

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [MARR](#) [PE](#)

SUBJECT: TOLEDO MAKES ANOTHER CONTROVERSIAL PICK FOR ARMY CHIEF

REF: A. LIMA 3474

[1](#)B. LIMA 5851 (04)

Classified By: Poloff David C. Brooks. Reason: 1.4(b/d).

SUMMARY

[1](#)1. (C) President Toledo has named a reported personal favorite, General Cesar Reinoso Diaz, to become Commanding General of the Army, passing over the three officers who would normally be considered next in line for the job by Army guidelines (which include seniority and military merit). Two of the three will now retire according to military custom. Similar moves by Toledo one year ago led to the resignations in protest of the Commanding Generals of the Air Force and the Army (Ref B). While this incident constitutes no/no threat to the stability of the Toledo Government, it does indicate how the President's judgment, when it comes to hiring and firing, irritates key sectors and works against sustaining the norms that promote long-term stability in a key institution. Despite some lingering hard feelings within the military, we expect business as usual once the dust settles. END SUMMARY.

Toledo Reaches Down in the Ranks

[1](#)2. (U) President Alejandro Toledo's controversial naming of General Cesar Reinoso Diaz as Commanding General of the Army has caused some dissension in the officer corps. News of the pending decision produced a series of leaks to the press on 12/16 that the three high-ranking generals to be passed over by Toledo -- Chief of the Joint Staff of the Peruvian Armed Forces General Alberto Woll Gonzales, Chief of the Northern Military Region General Jose Williams Zapata, and Chief of the Staff of the Army General Jesus Reyes Tavera -- would resign in protest. (Note: Williams Zapata is regarded as a hero by many -- even some in the human rights community -- for his leading role in the 1997 Chavin de Huantar Operation where the Peruvian military freed 70 hostages held by MRTA terrorists at the Japanese Ambassador's Residence. He also faces charges, along with 28 others, of involvement in the Accomarca massacre in Ayacucho in 1985 -- Ref A. End Note.) Generals Woll and Reyes Tavera will now retire. Generals Reinoso Diaz and Williams Zapata were sworn in as Commanding General of the Army and Chief of the Armed Forces Joint Command respectively on 12/19.

[1](#)3. (U) Reportedly, Reinoso Diaz gained Toledo's confidence when he served as the Presidential Military Advisor during the transitional government of former President Valentin Paniagua and during the first year and a half of Toledo's term.

[1](#)4. (U) In describing the alleged tensions within the military resulting from Toledo's decision, press reports focused on a similar incident one year ago when President Toledo and MOD Roberto Chiabra modified the promotion lists for the Army and the Air Force, prompting the heads of both institutions to resign. (Both were to retire within the year anyway - Ref B.)

Comment:

[1](#)5. (C) While President Toledo's naming of Reinoso Diaz as Commanding General of the Army has caused grumbling, Post sees no/no threat to the Toledo government's stability or to the basic loyalty of the Armed Forces. No one has questioned the President's right to name the Commanding General of the Army. Instead, many question the wisdom of his choice, which appears to reflect personal favoritism over institutional norms for advancement. This frustrates officers who waited in the ranks and works against institutional stability. That said, we fully expect military leadership to accept the President's judgment, albeit with some lingering resentment. STRUBLE